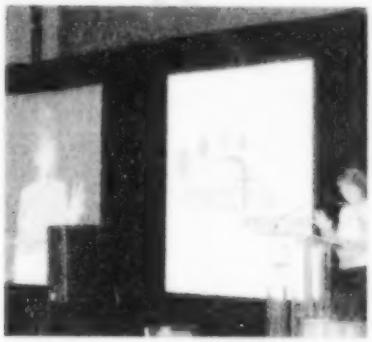
Education Report

CONFERENCE CONNECTS PARTNERS

The Province is hosting webcasts to help regions share their areas of expertise. At the ground-breaking May 25–26 Interactive Innovations conference, there were five regions, each with a different theme: early learning in Kelowna, secondary-school learners in Nelson, equitable futures in Prince George, shared leadership in Victoria, and literacy in Whistler. ***Read more.***



The Province hosted a groundbreaking education conference that heralded five themes by using webcasting technology to connect sites across B.C.

HOT TOPIC

It's that time of year again: time for provincial exams.

Grade 10, 11 and 12 provincial exams set standards that help ensure all students graduate with a firm foundation in science, math, language arts and social studies.

Provincial exam results – together with the Grade 4 and 7 Foundation Skills Assessment (FSA) – let government, school districts, schools and school planning councils know where students are doing well and where students need to improve. This leads to targeted plans to improve student achievement.

B.C. provincial exams are not "high stakes" or "pass/fail" tests – and they are very different from the standardized tests common in the UK and US.

For one thing, Grade 10 and 11 exams count for only 20 per cent of a student's final mark, while Grade 12 exams count for 40 per cent. In every case, class work remains the majority of a student's final mark.

As well, B.C. teachers develop our provincial exams based on the B.C. curriculum. B.C. teachers also mark the exams to a provincial standard.

Teacher involvement – and the balance between provincial assessment and classroom assessment – make B.C.'s provincial exams a model for other provinces and countries. In fact, B.C. is seen as a leader in improving student achievement through tests like FSA and provincial exams.

Government's number one goal is to make B.C. the best educated, most-literate jurisdiction on the continent, and standardized tests are one of the tools that will help us reach that goal.

Good luck to the Grade 10, 11 and 12 students preparing to write provincial exams.

"Crazy About Canada! Amazing Things Kids Want to Know"
Written by Vivien Bowers
Illustrated by Dianne Eastman

Reading Corner

Nelson author Vivien Bowers invited children from across Canada to ask her questions. She then turned herself into a cartoon character, wrote herself into her book, and took on head scratches like, "Why are beavers' teeth orange?" and "Which school is closest to the North Pole?" Part of the Canadian Geographic Kids series, this book is sure to educate and entertain students in grades 4–6.

Message from Minister Shirley Bond

Honourable Shirley Bond, Minister of Education

B.C. students benefit when our education partners share success stories and ideas, and engage the international education community. I'm proud that this government held two important conferences at the end of May, connecting B.C. educators, and featuring experts from across Canada and the U.S., plus Australia, Scotland, and New Zealand.

The first conference looked at health and our schools. Tobacco, inactivity, poor nutrition and obesity are contributing causes to our most common chronic diseases. We must help students develop decision-making skills and we must encourage healthy choices. This will help students in school and in life.

The second conference, Interactive Innovations, provided me with the unique ability to be in several places at once. Thanks to state-of-the-art webcasting technology, I was able to join educators at five sites around the province as they took part in professional learning opportunities. This new technology is helping us break down barriers in education. It is also allowing us to enhance the classroom experience and bridge vast distances by giving students access and choice no matter where they live.

We know that when educators grow, students win. That's why our government supports conferences like Interactive Innovations, which tackled the question of how we can reach out to the one-in-five students who do not complete school. B.C. is enjoying record-high completion rates, but we are determined to do even better, to make B.C. the best educated, most-literate jurisdiction in North America. Through conferences like these, we will succeed.

Read more about the ***health*** and ***education*** conferences, and the benefit to B.C. students.